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One incident was reported of a Chinese father who tried to drown his first child, a girl. The Siaton Chinese believed if their first child were a female their business would be unsuccessful. This Chinese was jailed and every Sunday, for one month, tied, whipped and driven around the poblacion by the Guardia Civil to be taunted by the populace. He later left the poblacion having "lost face."

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Every February (Chinese New Year) the Chinese merchants in Siaton poblacion would hold a gala celebration. They closed their stores and met to feast and frolic. Prominent poblacion officials were sent baskets of food and fruit and some were invited to Chinese homes for an elaborate dinner.

Lucas Ege Founds Barrio Caticugan

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The first reference to Lucas Ege, founder of Barrio Caticugan, is his election as capitan in 1859.[66] His grandson, still living, said Lucas was born in the locality of Siaton but he did not know the birthplace of Ege's father. The land where Barrio Caticugan is now situated (not including Naga, Dangola, and Talo-ot) was owned by Father Celestino Romero, priest of Siaton parish. Romero succeeded Mezquita; the exact date is not known but it was before 1856.[67]

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[66]Capitan Kinkito was followed by Celestino Makagig (1841-42); Rosindo Kinamot (1843-44); Gabriel Kibotkibot, nicknamed "Antoy" (1845-46); Pedro Macolbacol, nicknamed "Padugo" (1847-48); Francisco Ege, nicknamed "Iton" (1853-54); Felipe Nacapanas, nicknamed "Anyag" (1855-56); Rosindo Kinamot, nicknamed "Balangka" (1857-58) and Lucas Ege (1859-60). These family names are still common in Siaton.

[67]Ruiz, op. cit., p. 151.

20: Part E-5 (.95.) 1954 OA1 Philippines
Central Bisayan OA14

175* 466 [622]

In Siaton the cabezas were also responsible for the forced labor called polo or prestacion personal, required by the Spaniards. Until 1884 the Spaniards required all male Filipinos from sixteen to sixty years of age to work forty days each year in building or repairing public bridges and roads, cutting timber, working in artillery foundries, shipyards, etc. One could escape the polo by paying a sum of money, called falla, in lieu of actual labor.[78] In 1884 the polo was reduced in the Philippines from forty to fifteen days.

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In Siaton, however, the polo was said to be only thirty days each year and the men were paid thirty centavos (fifteen cents) a week for their labor.

Cadiane, who once supervised these workers, said the men often paid a falla of two pesos (one dollar), the equivalent of ten hours of work. "Many just paid because the mud was sticky and knee-deep in the roads when it rained." The cabezas had to attend church every Sunday in the poblacion. If they failed to attend they were punished, sometimes whipped, by the Spaniards' in the poblacion. Zaide writes: "Every Sunday, after Mass, the gobernadorcillo, the cabezas de barangay, and other town officials...would repair to the convent, and, on bended knees, kiss the hand of the padre."[79]

175* 622 527 [681]

[78] Zaide, op. cit., pp. 172-3 and James L. Le Roy, The Americans in the Philippines: A History of the Conquest and First Years of Occupation with an Introductory Account of the Spanish Rule. New York, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1941, I, p. 45.

[79] Zaide, The Philippines Since the British Invasion, p. 164.

51:Hart E-3 (1950-1952)1954 OA1 Philippines
Central Bisayan OA14

796 Queen is proclaimed at the evening dance. *Vesperas* is the "day of arrival" of most of the fiesta visitors; at least, it is the ideal pattern. If
535 one lives fairly near the fiesta, one may not come until early *kahalogan* morning. The young men and women, however, prefer to arrive on *vesperas* in order to attend the dance that evening, an event which holds little attraction for most older Filipinos. (In the smaller *barrios* the dances are rarely attended by the older people who do not know how to dance the fox-trots, mambos and tangos of the younger generation.) The
514 arrival of relatives and guests on *vesperas* depends upon such factors as; (1) distance one lives from the fiesta; (2) transportation facilities; (3) whether relatives are living in the community giving the fiesta; (4) prestige of the fiesta; (5) weather conditions, etc. For larger fiestas special busses are added to the regular schedule and the fare is often raised.

796 *Vesperas* may begin with a "reveille" or *diana*, as early as four or
507 five in the morning, when the orchestra marches around the *poblacion* playing sprightly melodies to awaken the people—many of whom have been up for hours busy with food preparations or gambling all night. One can often determine the residences of the *principalia* by following the band, for their route is normally from one such residence to another where they stop to play a few minutes and then pass on. Often the orchestra's members may be invited inside for a breakfast snack. There may be some fireworks after the *diana*. While the fiesta programs for *kahalogan* invariably state that church services follow the *diana*, this is not always the case in *vesperas*. If masses are held, they are followed by athletic games.

At noon the church bells are rung and more fireworks may be exploded. A few fiesta programs list "Dinner in all houses" but this event is not as frequently included in the progams for *vesperas* as on *kahalogan*. Meals served *vesperas* noon are not as elaborate as those served *kahalogan* noon. *Vesperas* afternoon is filled with sports, Boy Scout exhibitions, demonstration of folk dances or calisthenics by the local school children. Gambling activities continue all day, either at the residences of the people, or at the mean gambling area of the fiesta, often the market place. There are
857 games of chance, such as *palipat, diolens, or argolya*, card games, *monte*, *albores*, or *hantak*, and cockfights. There are games of chance for the "small fry" which require only one-centavo bets. Frequently, the writer saw small boys (10-14 years) dealing at card games and was told that they had been hired by gamblers to impress the players that their game was an honest one.

51:Hart E-3 (1950-1952)1954 OA1 Philippines
Central Bisayan OA14

796 527 A somewhat distinct feature of some *vesperas* afternoon programs is the "Civic" or "Inaugural" parade of the winning candidates of the beauty contest. Floats are entered in the parade by various groups within the community, e. g. schoolteachers, municipal employees, etc. A religious procession was listed in some of the fiesta programs for late *vesperas* afternoon, although the writer did not observe such a procession on this day at the fiesta attended. Several programs also stated a Holy Rosary would be held in the late afternoon in the church or chapel. This is a fairly common feature (although often omitted from the printed programs) since *vesperas* is normally the ninth and last of the pre-fiesta *novena* prayers. There may be more fireworks around six o'clock, although there are fewer fireworks in the fiesta today owing to recent government restrictions levied against their importation. It seems that the use of fireworks during the fiesta is a Chinese addition. [177]

527 537 The proclamation dance *vesperas* evening may begin as early as six p. m. The admission charge for the dance is lower than for the Coronation Ball held *kahologan*, averaging ₱1.50 to ₱2.00. This price is one indication that the Proclamation Dance is not considered such a gala and important affair as the Coronation Ball. Normally, both in the *barrio* and *poblacion*, women are admitted free to these dances "to attract the men," who must pay. There is a program which includes the presentation to the audience of winners of the beauty contest. A local speaker introduces the proclamation guest orator who is normally a provincial official, a prominent attorney, or an affluent citizen of Dumaguete. Sometimes the local congressman may be the speaker but not as frequently as for the Coronation Ball. The most important speaker is usually reserved for the most important dance, the Coronation Ball.

527 535 437 The program for the Proclamation dance may include prizes for the best tango, bee-bop, rhumba, calypso couples, "surprise" numbers, and other entertainment. One fiesta program stated that an auction of "bouquets" for the "Fiesta Muse" would be held, the *poblacion* counterpart of the *barrio* fiesta custom of "selling flowers" at their dances.[8] The dance may continue until after midnight; one fiesta program stated the dance would last from six in the evening to six the following morning.

[8] During the pre-fiesta and fiesta dances in Barrio Caticugan, one flower was auctioned to the highest bidder, who was permitted to dance for one dance with the local belle the flower represented, while the people watched. Often three or four flowers would be auctioned during the dance, the money collected being used to finance the fiesta. This custom was more frequently observed at *barrio* than *poblacion* fiestas.

51:Hart E-3 (1950-1952)1954 OA1 Philippines
Central Bisayan OA14

796 527 *Kahologan* begins around four or five in the morning with the *diana* or reveille. After this event some *poblacions* may have a small fireworks display or shoot off a few booming rockets. Then, from about six to nine, masses are held. The church is usually jammed and more men are present [793] than at the regular weekly services. (In the *barrios* only one mass is per- [369] formed on *kahologan*, often the only mass of the year in the small chapel owing to the shortage of priests in the Philippines.)[9] After the masses there is a light breakfast (*pa-init*) of various types of rice cakes (*puto*, *bodbod*, or *bingka*), bread, hot chocolate, fruit, etc. The remainder of the [526] morning is devoted to sports— basketball, volleyball, and softball games, horse, bicycle, and "crab" races, carabao fights, eating contests, or billiard competition. Often teams vie for prizes or trophies which have been donated by patrons, and are awarded *kahologan* evening.

527 At twelve noon the church bells are rung, often three times, and the orchestra marches around the *poblacion*, playing loudly and enthusiastically. This is the *jornada*. Rockets may be fired into the air and the *luthangs* [574] (home-made bamboo cannons) shot. This is when the "big feast" of the fiesta is served. There is often much competition among the *principalia* to attract to their dwelling for this dinner the most prominent visitors to the fiesta. Since food is synonymous with hospitality for most Filipinos, the tables groan under the weight of different meat courses, rice and noodle dishes, *lechon* (roast pig), drinks (coke, beer, and perhaps whisky and brandy), etc. A number of Filipino hostesses told the writer, when he attended fiestas in in the larger *poblacions* or in Dumaguete, that they admired the American custom of serving a meal consisting of only several courses. However, to do so during a *kahologan* dinner, they said, would be considered unfavorably by their guests. Meals are served in relays, the tables being cleared after one setting and reset for the next group of guests. Visiting friends during *kahologan* is often most painful, since one must eat, at least the delicacies prepared by one's hosts, although one's capacity to consume more food is absolutely non-existent.

After dinner, which may continue for several hours, with guests coming

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[793] [9] In 1952 there were 2492 Catholic priests in the Philippines for an estimated 15,810,024 Catholics, or one priest for 6340 Catholics. The average of the Philippines is lower than the average of Latin America (one priest for 5104 Catholics) and much lower than the average for the United States (one priest for 620 Catholics). Leo A. Cullum, S.J., "Distribution of Priests", *Philippine Studies*, 1:169-173, September, 1953. A review of an article written by J. Luzzi, S. J., "L'appel de l' Amerique latine", *Nouvelle Revue Theologique*.

51:Hart E-3 (1950-1952)1954 OA1 Philippines
Central Bisayan OA14

527 and going, the athletic games and contests are resumed. The older folks may take a siesta, visit or gossip with friends and relatives, or play mah-jong. If the *poblacion* is near a large river there may be aquatic sports. The gambling never stops, but continues night and day. Cockfights are held.

796 Between five and six, the religious procession occurs. The figure of the patron saint is carried outside the *poblacion* church, after a brief service, and slowly taken on a platform around the *poblacion*, under the four arches when they exit. In one *poblacion* the writer remarked about the absence of the arches and was informed this was *not* a *barrio* fiesta. The patron saint is followed by the priests who are visiting the local priest and by the people, mostly women and children who often hold lighted candles and sing hymns. The procession returns to the church where another short service is held before the people disperse. Another fireworks display may be held at the end of the procession.

527 535 The Coronation Ball begins around seven or eight p.m. in the auditorium (the school building) or the outdoor dance hall (usually the *poblacion* plaza). The admission prizes varies from ₱2.00 to ₱3.00. Ladies are admitted free as is the custom. However, if a man brings more than two ladies, he is charged for his additional female companions.

At the Coronation Ball the "Queen" and her "Princesses" are installed. The new Queen may be crowned by the Queen of the previous year and some *poblacions* have torch parades to escort the Queen from her residence [537] to the dance. There is an introductory speech by a local official of the *poblacion* to introduce the guest speaker. The Coronation Ball speaker is quite frequently the congressmen of the district in which the *poblacion* is located, the governor, or a choice from other top provincial officials. Normally the congressman of Negros Oriental province speak at these fiestas in their own districts, although this is not always the case. After the crowning of the Queen of the fiesta, there may be a "Parade of the Royal Family," and the prizes and trophies are awarded to the winners. Contests are held for the best tango, mambo or waltz couple, and vocal solos or orations are given. When the program is over, the dance continues into the early hours of the following morning. The Coronation Ball is usually the fiesta climax for the young people who dance gracefully and tirelessly almost until dawn.

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527 666 The fiestas have a political function, particularly those held in the cities, *poblacions* or larger *barrios* located along the National Road. The small *barrio* fiesta, such as that at Caticugan, rarely has such a func-

51:Hart E-3 (1950-1952)1954 OA1 Philippines
Central Bisayan OA14

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tion, for their poverty, political insignificance, and isolation make it difficult to attract congressmen or even provincial officials as guests or speakers. The political function of the fiesta increases when they are held during an election year. It is common knowledge in the Philippines that many national government officials use invitations to crown the Queen of the fiesta or give the Coronation Ball oration to build personal and party "political fences" in the area. During the last presidential election, a Manila newspaper noted that a wife of a prominent Representative, up for re-election, was accepting invitations "to even barrio fiestas." The comment was made that perhaps the wife was worried her husband would not be re-elected and was campaigning for him among the barrio folk. This use of the fiesta by some politicians is often felt to be undesirable by many Filipinos, although there is no reason why it should be. Campaigning is a legitimate activity of any elective public official. This relatively common attitude in regard to the political functions of many fiestas may reflect the better-educated Filipino's concern over the growing secularism of a supposedly religious event.

The printed fiesta programs, for example, often contain congratulatory messages from various officials, including the President of the Philippines. A study of the nature of these fiesta messages show they may be merely excessive flattery of the local inhabitants for their "progressiveness," "initiative," "industry," "hospitality," etc. For example:

> The people of ... (wrote one congressman) are industrious, loyal and energetic citizens of the country . . . . On the occasion of your town fiesta, I am sending my most cordial greetings to the noble and brave sons and daughters of this great town.

Some messages stress the importance of the fiesta, a distinctive Philippine custom. Former President Quirino wrote in one fiesta program:

> The celebration of the town (*poblacion*) fiesta is a unique Philippine custom. It affords the people a better opportunity to come together, work together, and enjoy together—thus fostering closer community spirit among themselves. This is precisely what the country needs today; oneness of purpose among our people as we tackle the great task of nation-building.

Some messages printed in the fiesta programs may urge the people to be more socially conscious. For example, the citizens of one district were praised by the mayor of Dumaguete City because they

51:Hart E-3 (1950-1952)1954 OA1 Philippines
Central Bisayan OA14

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> ...do not neglect their duty in sending their children to school because they believe that in a democracy what is paramount is education, which is necessary for good citizenship.[10]

The messages may praise the *principalia* of the *poblacion*. One fiesta program states:

> Such great and prominent men as the late Governor Demetrio Larena, the late Senator Hermenegildo Villanueva, the late Representative Enrique C. Villanueva, the late Governor Guillermo Z. Villanueva, and the late Governor Praxedes Villanueva; all these dead national figures hailed and were reared in . . . (name of *poblacion*).

Such a sentence underlines the personalism typical of most Philippine politics.

Many of the messages, however, have a definite political slant, usually praising the national, provincial, or municipal politicians. In the printed fiesta program of one small *poblacion*, the then Speaker of the House of Representatives wrote:

> You are indeed fortunate in having Congressman... (of the same party as the Speaker) as your representative in Congress. I am happy to tell you that Congressman ... is truly a representative of the people.... He is one of the most able members of the House .... With him, the fortune and future of your town is in safe hands. I urge you, therefore, to extend to him your unqualified support and cooperation.

(This fiesta occurred just before the election in which the congressman was running for a provincial office.)

Below are a few samples of the political aspects of many of the messages printed in the fiesta programs.

Important strides have been made towards the beautification

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[10] This statement is an illustration of how effectively the American Administration (1898-1946) in the Philippines transferred *the American attitude that* education is a panacea for all economic and social problems. As for the *actual influence* of American educational theories and practices in rural Philippines, one noted Filipino educator has written about the "little dent the much-vaunted American-sponsored educational system has made in Philippine rural life." Laya, J.C. *Little Democracies* (Revised edition; Manila: Inang Wika Publishing Co., 1951, p. 6

51:Hart E-3 (1950-1952)1954 OA1 Philippines
Central Bisayan OA14

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of the 'poblacion', thanks to the deep and abiding interest of congressman.. in the welfare and well-being of the community.

A top government official of Negros Oriental province stated in his message printed in one fiesta program that he would be unable to attend the event because:

> I am leaving for Manila soon in the interest and welfare of our province.

The congressman of one of the districts of Negros Oriental praised a local official in his fiesta message, stating he

> (official's name) .., is the guiding star that points to me the things needed by this town and hence I can say safely that the improvements and beautification of (the town)... is due mostly to the endeavor and sacrifices of our beloved.... (official's name).

The former Vice-President of the Philippines in his message printed on one fiesta program urged that the people work together because:

> Communal solidarity is necessary for the success of this affair just as national unity is essential for the growth of a nation.... To promote this unity, it is imperative for us to cultivate a community spirit against the factors that cause dissension and disorder among the people—corrupt practices of officials and individuals alike, such as abuse of authority and profiteering practiced by opportunists on the helpless masses. These corruptions can be remedied by the combined efforts on the part of the government authorities and the people.

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The fiestas stimulate local commereial activities. All who can afford it, and many who cannot, buy a new dress or a pair of trousers, clothing for the children, get a permanent wave, or purchase large supplies of food for their expected guests. Some Filipinos will borrow money or mortgage their land in order to have the means to entertain properly their visitors during the annual fiesta. So much personal and family prestige is involved that few measures are too drastic for some to maintain the expected level of hospitality; this is particularly true in the *poblacions*. Frugalities of the year, the penny-pinching to make ends meet, the saving for the unknown exigencies of the future, are discarded by many Filipinos for several days of "fun and frolic," of living fully.

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To the *poblacions* and *barrios*, even such as Caticugan but less so, come many itinerant vendors selling a variety of wares, normally unavaila-

51:Hart E-3 (1950-1952)1954 OA1 Philippines
Central Bisayan OA14

ble in the local stores. There are rosaries, religious pictures, ice cream, novel candies, etc. This is the time when the girls and women from the *barrios* make great mounds of rice cakes and sell them at the local fiestas, adding the small profit to the family exchequer. Some of the women from Caticugan went as far away as the fiestas of Giliga-on and Bonawon to sell their food, *guhang* (a mildly alcoholic drink made from the fermented sap of the buri palm), and vegetables. They set up little "cafes" near the fiesta area where one might buy food or drink. Vendors from Dumaguete come to the *barrios*, and particularly the *poblacions*, with their merchandize, establishing their temporary stalls along the roads near the cockpit or gambling area. A lucky catch in a *bonsod* (fish coral) during a *poblacion* fiesta can bring the owner a small fortune overnight.

The circulation of currency in the *barrios*— where the barter system is still prominent— is at its height during the fiesta. The vendors and gamblers and other activities of the fiesta require money; one cannot barter for a place at the gambling table or for admission to the dance. This is when the bamboo banks are broken and the money used to purchase the necessary fiesta supplies. The fiesta is one of the relatively few occasions (others are weddings, funerals, etc.) when the barriofolk slaughter pigs, goats, cattle and even carabaos. The family "fiesta pig" is killed for *lechon*, having been fattening all year. There is more fish and fresh meat in the market places than at any other time of the year. Young people often go to the city to earn sufficient money to spend during fiesta. The fiesta has become a secular, in ways commercial, enterprise, which requires currency in order for one to participate in many activities. During most of the year, many of the barriofolk in Caticugan earn or spend little money; they barter their way from one need to another need.

In summary, the *barrio* or *poblacion* fiesta complex has a variety of functions. *First*, the fiesta is the "big blow-out" of the year, anticipated by young and old for often different reasons. There is a singing gaiety in the air, a lightness of step, and a mood of relaxation in a fiesta-invaded locality. As the writer was once told at a fiesta: "This is the time when 'thanks' is redundant." Second, the fiesta affords many persons, particularly in the *poblacion*, an opportunity to validate their social position through a conspicious consumption of wealth, a lavish expression of hospitality. This association of hospitality with food may be traced back to the pre-Spanish culture of the Filipinos. Municipal and provincial officials, prominent visitors and other guests, are treated with extravagant courtesy and an overabundance of generosity. *Third*, the fiesta is an econo-

51:Hart E-3 (1950-1952)1954 OA1 Philippines
Central Bisayan OA14

Tenth, in the larger barrio
527 and *poblacion* the fiesta has a definite political function, especially in furnish-
666 ing politicians with opportunities for making speeches, mending political
181 "fences," and encouraging the officialdom of the local and provincial governments. *Eleventh*, the fiesta is one means of introducing into small *barrios* some of the techniques of democracy, of working together with one's neighbors in committees, and making a profit which is used to improve social or cultural conditions in the community. The printed fiesta programs have an educational function with their short, if not too critical, histories of the local region, listing all the provincial and municipal officials etc.

527 After *kahologan* there may be a few dances, a "Barn Dance," a "Fash-
525 ion Show," but the fiesta spirit is gone. The gambling activities may continue for several days after the end of the fiesta, but with less fervor. In the *barrios*, for the most part , the normal routine takes over after *kahologan*. Lechon pits are filled. The bamboo arches slowly succumb to the elements or to fence-building scavengers. The professional gamblers depart with their tables and games for another fiesta. The gay window curtains, doilies, and tablecloths are packed away in the family trunk until next year. The *barrio* chapel decorations wilt and gather dust. For a while the barriofolk speak of *liwas piyesta* ("after the fiesta") in dating events in time. Soon the fiesta becomes only a pleasant memory. Before this memory has faded completely, preparations are afoot for the next fiesta. [178] Nearly every *barrio* and *poblacion* has an innate consistent "strain" toward making the next fiesta "more modern," or "progressive." This may mean a better orchestra, maybe electric lights for the first time, a bigger beauty contest, a more important speaker, a printed instead of typed fiesta program, or a larger statue of their patron saint.

Few Americans who have attended a Philippine fiesta forget the gay event or the warm friendship and spontaneous hospitality of their hosts. It is the writer's hope that this tentative sketching of the rural Philippine fiesta complex may interest Filipinos in making a more detailed study of one of the unique aspects of their culture.[11]

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[11] The author would be most grateful for any critical comments on this article from Filipino readers of the *Silliman Journal*. All letters received will be carefully read and promptly answered.